LISTING OF CLAIMS

This current claim listing replaces all previous version(s) of the claims.

1.   (**Currently Amended**) A computer-implemented method comprising:

receiving a set of product attributes denoting a customer's desired product configuration and flexibility constraints corresponding to one or more of the product attributes, wherein the flexibility constraints indicate a customer-designated priority for the corresponding one or more ~~flexibility constraints~~ **product attributes**;

automatically transmitting an automatically prepared request for quote (RFQ) to an automatically selected set of sellers, **the sellers selected based at least in part on the sellers having the general product of the desired product configuration,** the RFQ including at least a subset of the received set of product attributes and corresponding flexibility constraints; and

notifying the requesting customer upon receipt of quotes in response to the transmitted RFQ.

2-29.   (Canceled)

30.   (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein receiving the set of product attributes comprises:

providing a customer with a graphical user interface (GUI) at an accessible computing system, the GUI comprising one or more modifiable fields and/or pull-down menus through which the customer can selectively assemble the set of product attributes associated with a desired product configuration.

31.   (Canceled)

32. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, further comprising:

querying one or more electronic databases of existing product configurations to

determine whether a product representing the received set of product attributes is available.

33. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 32, further comprising:

receiving a response to the query that a product with the requested set of attributes is not

available; and

providing the customer with an indication that the set of attributes is not available.

34. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 33, further comprising:

identifying one or more available product configurations that meet at least a subset of the

received set of attributes from the electronic database; and

prompting the customer with an opportunity to select one or more of the identified

product configurations with which to generate the RFQ.

35. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 32, wherein the electronic database

contains information from product manufacturers regarding the available set of product

configurations.

36. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 35, wherein at least a subset of the

electronic database(s) are managed by the product manufacturers.

37. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 35, wherein at least a subset of the

electronic database(s) are populated with product availability information from one or more

sellers.

38. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein transmitting the RFQ comprises:

confirming that a product representing the received set of product attributes is manufactured;

generating the RFQ using the received set of product attributes and flexibility constraints; and

selecting a subset of sellers from the plurality of sellers to which the generated RFQ is transmitted based, at least in part, on user attribute(s) associated with the requesting customer.

39. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 38, wherein the user attribute(s) include one or more of a geographic location of the customer, shipping preferences of the customer, and/or delivery location(s) of the customer.

40. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 38, wherein selection of the subset of sellers is based, at least in part, on seller attribute(s).

41. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 40, wherein seller attribute(s) include one or more of a geographic location of the seller, product availability, product affiliation, and/or prior sales performance history of the seller.

42. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 38, further comprising:

generating the RFQ using a modified set of product attributes if the received set of attributes are not available.

43. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein notifying the customer comprises:

receiving one or more quotes from sellers in response to the transmitted RFQ;

identifying one or more of the received quotes that meet a largest subset of the set of product attributes and a largest subset of user attributes; and

transmitting the identified one or more quotes to the customer.

44. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 43, wherein transmitting the identified quote(s) comprises one or more of sending an electronic mail (eMail) message including at least a subset of the quote(s) to the customer, faxing at least a subset of the quote(s) to the customer, and/or providing a customer computing device with instructions to generate a graphical user interface including at least a subset of the received quote(s).

45. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein notifying the customer is performed using one or more of a telephone, electronic mail (eMail) message and/or a facsimile transmission.

46. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, further comprising:

receiving an indication of acceptance of at least one of the received quotes from the customer; and

notifying a seller associated with the accepted quote of the acceptance to facilitate purchase of the product.

47. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 46, wherein notifying the seller associated with the accepted quote is performed using one or more of a telephone, electronic mail (eMail) message and/or a facsimile transmission.

48. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the received set of product attributes and flexibility constraints are received from an intermediary on behalf of the requesting customer, wherein the intermediary provides an indication, either explicit or implicit, that the customer has funds available to complete the purchase.

49. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 48, wherein the intermediary is the customer.

50. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 48, wherein the intermediary is one of a banking institution, lending institution, product representative associated with a manufacturer of the product, and/or a re-seller of the product.

51. (Canceled)

52. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, further comprising:

tracking a status of the transmitted RFQ's to selectively provide a customer with an update of the status of their request.

53. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 52, wherein the update is selectively provided on at least one of a periodic basis, upon a request from the customer, and/or upon receipt of status notifications received from one or more of the seller(s).

54. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the product is an automobile, and the seller(s) are individual automobile dealers.

55. (Previously Presented) A storage medium comprising a plurality of machine executable instructions which, when executed by an accessing machine, cause the machine to implement a method according to claim 1.

56. (**Currently Amended**) A computing system comprising:

a memory system having stored therein a plurality of executable instructions; and

a processor system, coupled to the memory system, to access and execute at least a subset of the plurality of executable instructions to enable the computing system to receive a desired set of product attributes from a requesting customer and flexibility constraints corresponding to one or more of the product attributes, wherein the flexibility constraints indicate a customer-

designated priority for the corresponding one or more ~~flexibility constraints~~ **product**

attributes, and wherein the flexibility constraints represent an extent to which a customer

will negotiate an alteration with respect to the product attribute corresponding to the

flexibility constraint, to automatically transmit a request for quote (RFQ) dynamically

generated from the received set of product attributes and corresponding flexibility constraints to

an automatically selected set of sellers, and to notify the requesting customer of the receipt of

one or more quotes in response to the transmitted RFQ's.

57.   (Previously Presented) A computing system according to claim 56, further comprising

instructions to transmit executable instructions to a customer accessible computing device to

provide the customer with a graphical user interface (GUI), the GUI comprising one or more

modifiable fields and/or pull-down menus through which the customer can selectively assemble

the set of product attributes associated with a desired product configuration.

58.   (Canceled)

59.   (Previously Presented) A computing system according to claim 56, further comprising

instructions to query one or more electronic databases of existing product configurations to

determine whether a product representing the received set of product attributes is available.

60.   (Previously Presented) A computing system according to claim 59, further comprising

instructions to provide the customer with an indication that the requested set of attributes is not

available upon receiving a negative response to the query.

61.   (Previously Presented) A computing system according to claim 60, further comprising

instructions to identify one or more available product configurations that meet at least a subset of

received set of attributes, and to prompt the customer with an opportunity to select the identified

product configuration(s) with which to generate the RFQ(s).

62. (Previously Presented) A computing system according to claim 56, wherein the instructions to transmit the RFQ includes instructions to confirm that a product representing the received set of product attributes is available, generate the RFQ using the received set of attributes and flexibility constraints, and to select a subset of sellers from the plurality of sellers based, at least in part, on user attribute(s) associated with the requesting customer.

63. (Previously Presented) A computing system according to claim 62, wherein the user attribute(s) include one or more of a geographic location of the customer, shipping preferences of the customer, and/or a delivery location of the customer.

64. (Previously Presented) A computing system according to claim 62, wherein selection of the subset of sellers is based, at least in part, on seller attribute(s).

65. (Previously Presented) A computing system according to claim 64, wherein seller attribute(s) include one or more of a geographic location of the seller, product availability, product affiliation, and/or prior sales performance history of the seller.

66. (Previously Presented) A computing system according to claim 65, further comprising instructions to develop a sales performance history of a seller based, at least in part, on prior transactions.

67. (Previously Presented) A computing system according to claim 62, further comprising instructions to generate the RFQ using a modified set of product attributes if a product representing the received set of attributes are not available.

68. (Previously Presented) A computing system according to claim 56, wherein the instructions to notify the customer comprise instructions to receive one or more quotes from seller(s) in response to the transmitted RFQ, to identify one or more of the received quotes that

meet a largest subset of the set of product attributes and a largest subset of user attributes, and to transmit identified quote(s) to the customer.

69. (Previously Presented) A computing system according to claim 56, further comprising instructions to receive an indication of acceptance from the customer of at least one of the received quote(s), and to notify the seller associated with the accepted quote of the acceptance to facilitate purchase of the product.

70. (Previously Presented) A computing system according to claim 56, further comprising instructions to indicate on the RFQ that the set of attributes was received from a customer through an authenticated buyer.

71. (Previously Presented) A computing system according to claim 56, further comprising instructions to track a status of the transmitted RFQ's, and to selectively provide a customer with an update of the status of their request.

72. (**New**) A method for negotiating over a wide-area network between a customer and a manufacturer-licensed seller a purchase of a product having multiple configurations characterized by multiple product attributes, comprising:

receiving at a networked intermediary subsystem a customer-defined product configuration description having a general product indication and a set of product attributes, the set including a ranking for each attribute to indicate a level of willingness of the customer to negotiate a modification of the attribute;

determining a qualification of the customer to transact the purchase;

comparing the customer-defined product configuration to available configurations indicated in an electronic product database stored on a network device to determine a seller

having the general product with a set of product attributes at least comparable to the customer-defined set of product attributes, based on the ranking indicated for each attribute;

generating at the intermediary subsystem and transmitting from the intermediary subsystem a request for quote (RFQ) for the customer-defined product configuration to a networked subsystem of the seller determined to have the general product with the set of comparable attributes;

receiving at the intermediary from the seller subsystem a quote indicating a price and a product attribute modification to propose to the customer a product configuration comparable to the customer-defined product configuration; and

indicating the quote to the customer.

73. (New) A method according to claim 72, wherein determining the qualification of the customer to transact the purchase comprises determining a maximum purchase capacity of the customer with respect to the product.

74. (New) A method according to claim 72, wherein the ranking to indicate a level of willingness of the customer to negotiate a modification with respect to each attribute comprises at least a discrete level of willingness by the customer to negotiate a modification of an attribute.

75. (New) A method according to claim 74, wherein determining the seller having the general product with the set of product attributes at least comparable to the customer-defined set of product attributes comprises determining the seller has the general product with a set of product attributes including a high percentage of the attributes for which the customer indicates a low level of willingness to negotiate a modification.